

REMARKS

The final office action of August 26, 2003, has been reviewed and the Examiner's comments carefully considered. The above amendment cancels claims 3 and 4. Claim 18 has been amended to recite the subject matter of cancelled claim 4. Claim 14 has been amended to correct a previous omission of the word "agent".

Support for the amendment to claim 14 can be found in the specification on page 7, line 29. No new matter is being added. Because the amendments do not incorporate any subject matter not already considered by the Examiner, no new issues are being raised.

Applicants respectfully acknowledge withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U. S. C. §102(b) over Nakae or Laver.

The Examiner has rejected claim 4 in the Office Action dated 26 August 2003 under 35 U. S. C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In view of the cancellation of this claim, Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is now moot.

Claims 3, 5, 6, 9, 13-15, and 18 have been rejected under 35 U. S. C §102(b) as being anticipated by Geary et al. as evidenced by Laver. Additionally, claims 3, 5, 6, 13-15, and 18 have been rejected under 35 U. S. C §102(b) as being anticipated by Chasser et al. as evidenced by Laver. In view of the current amendment, Applicants respectfully submit that these rejections are moot. As noted by the Examiner in previous Office Actions, none of Chasser, Geary, and Laver mentions the use of 2,6-di-tert-butyl-4-methyl-phenol. Additionally, Applicants respectfully submit that the use of 2,6-di-tert-butyl-4-methyl-phenol is not in any way suggested by any of the references, viewed alone or in any combination. Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections have been overcome. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Claim 4, the subject matter of which has been incorporated by amendment into claim 18, has been rejected under 35 U. S. C §103(a) as being obvious over Geary et al. as evidenced by Laver and in view of Nakae et al. Additionally, claim 4 has been rejected under 35 U. S. C §103(a) as being obvious over Chasser et al. as evidenced by Laver and in view of Nakae et al. The Nakae et al. reference teaches acid-epoxy type


powder coating compositions comprising antioxidants having a melting point of from 50°C to 140°C. The Examiner relies on Nakae et al. for the teaching of the use of 2,6-di-tert-butyl-4-methyl-phenol in powder coating compositions, asserting that certain phenol antioxidants, including 2,6-di-tert-butyl-4-methyl-phenol, are preferred in powder compositions because of their melting points. The Examiner concludes that it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to choose 2,6-di-tert-butyl-4-methyl-phenol as a phenolic antioxidant in either Chasser's or Geary's composition to form coatings having improved blocking resistance and melt processability.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's rejections. The present invention is directed to a coated aluminum substrate containing a cured coating, which in turn comprises a polymer containing carboxylic functional groups, a beta hydroxyalkylamide curing agent, and 0.5 to 10 weight percent of 2,6-di-tert-butyl-4-methyl-phenol. The coated substrate is explicitly characterized as having improved filiform corrosion resistance compared to a similar coated substrate that does not contain 2,6-di-tert-butyl-4-methyl-phenol in the cured coating. The Examiner's attention is directed to Table 2 on page 11 of the present application. Experimental results are presented demonstrating that the performance of coating compositions comprising a polymer containing carboxylic functional groups, a beta hydroxyalkylamide curing agent, and 2,6-di-tert-butyl-4-methyl-phenol (Example 1) is distinctly better than that of compositions containing other antioxidants. In particular, the density of corrosion filaments is significantly lower for coating compositions containing 2,6-di-tert-butyl-4-methyl-phenol than for compositions containing other phenolic antioxidants with *ortho*-substituents. Applicants respectfully submit that the coated substrates of the present invention, coated with compositions comprising a polymer containing carboxylic functional groups, a beta hydroxyalkylamide curing agent, and 2,6-di-tert-butyl-4-methyl-phenol, are not in any way suggested by any of the references, taken alone or in any combination, in light of the cured coatings' unexpected, improved filiform corrosion resistance. Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, it would not have been obvious to one skilled in the art to modify either the Geary composition or the Chasser composition by using 2,6-di-tert-butyl-4-methyl-phenol as an antioxidant as opposed to any other antioxidant. There is no teaching or suggestion to use 2,6-di-tert-butyl-4-methyl-phenol

in a powder coating composition comprising a polymer containing carboxylic functional groups and a beta hydroxyalkylamide curing agent. There is no recognition in the references of the unexpected filiform corrosion resistance achieved therewith, compared to the use of other antioxidants. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are allowable over the prior art. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Claims 5-7, 9, 13-15, and 18 remain in the application. It is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. A favorable action is requested for the reasons discussed above.

Respectfully Submitted,


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